

Sudden Deaths. This paragraph implies that sudden death occur more frequently among smokers, Schor et al. (86) specified one group of sudden deaths, i.e. those who die from coronary disease undetected. The incidence of sudden deaths of smokers compared to nonsmokers cannot be derived from the article. A portion of the Discussion is as follows:

The person who dies from coronary heart disease which has escaped detection constitutes a special problem. In our population 42% were in this category. Our findings show that, by our present techniques, such a person more closely resembled his alive counterpart without evidence of heart disease than he did the person who died with the diagnosis of the disease. Furthermore, this person died somewhat sooner after his last examination than did the man in whom the disease had been identified. The lethal process can, therefore, be presumed to have been advanced at the time of examination. Clearly, new or improved methods will be required to distinguish this man from normal persons. Recent studies (2) suggest that differences may reside in social, personality, or other factors that are not now tested in the usual periodic health examination. The one finding that, in our study, distinguished this man from his living counterpart, was heavy cigarette smoking. Whether this, as such, is an important factor or simply a reflection of some other factor we are not in a position to say.

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